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Harshavardhana in the
Karnatak
(Pgs. 1-3)

By H. Heras and
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HARSHAVARDHANA IN THE KARNATAK.

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34. 5. 12. BY REV. FR. H. HERAS S.J., M.A.
B.A., Salobre, M.A.

I

It has been well said that Harshavardhana "is a very interesting and remarkable personage."¹ But the novelty that surrounds his person is, I am afraid, more the result of what has been said about him than the effect of what he did either as a ruler or as a soldier. We are not concerned in this paper with his activities as a statesman, but we shall see something about his achievements as a soldier, especially as one who, according to the belief of some, has been credited with the conquests of not only the whole of North India but of a part of South India as well. I shall not relate, however, his conquests in North India which have been dealt with by Dr. R. C. Muzumdar,² but shall confine myself to his first two expeditions in the east and in the west and incidentally to the topic of his coronation, to his supposed war-like sojourns in the south, and to the movements in Western India which brought upon himself the mighty wrath of a ruler who was perhaps as great as, if not greater than, himself. Harsha's expeditions in the east and in the west will be narrated only in so far as they affect the question of his coronation and the greater question of his defeat at the hands of the famous Western Chalukya King, Pulakesi II. I intend to prove in this paper that the date of his defeat was in the year 612 A.D., and that he never came into the south, much less into the Chola and Karnatak lands.

Before I proceed, however, to narrate something about his early expedition, it must be out of place to mention about the two chronicles whose accounts form the mainstay in the matter of deciding the question of Harsha's coronation and that of his defeat.

¹ *Journal of the Mythic Society*, Vol. I, p. 15.

Bana, the famous court-poet of Harsha, abruptly ends his narrative with the return of Harsha to the Ganges from the Vindhya.¹ Huien Tsiang or Yuan Chwang, who left China in 629 A.D.,² supplements the description of Bana to a large extent, especially in the matter of the eastern and western campaigns. There is no doubt that when Huien Tsiang visited Harsha, the latter was already established beyond dispute in North India. Harsha was the master of the Five Indies, and when in 644 or thereabouts he held his last great Buddhist Council, the kings of twenty countries waited upon him.³ In his speech to the Chinese pilgrim on that memorable occasion, as recorded in the *Life of Huien Tsiang* by Hui Li, we read—"I propose, therefore, to call a grand assembly in the town of Kanyakubja and command the Siamans and Brahmins and heretics of the Five Indies to attend, in order to exhibit the refinements of the Great Vehicle, and demolish their abusive mind, to make manifest the exceeding merit of the Master, and overthrow their proud thought of self."⁴ What is found in the *Life of Huien Tsiang*, I venture to say, may not be fully relied upon, since the narrative of the life of the great Chinese pilgrim was written some years after his death by one of his great disciples. I admit that Shaoan Hui Li corroborates what Huien Tsiang says in practically the whole of the narrative. But it may be permissible to think whether or not the deep attachment which this disciple had for his master might not have clouded his writing the story of his master's life. The dearth of inscriptions of Harsha is, finally, another difficulty in the study of that monarch's reign.

The extent of Harsha's empire has been described by Dr. Muzumdar in the following terms:— "Thus Huien Tsiang's testimony, both in its positive and negative aspects, harmonizes with the epigraphical and literary evidence, and

¹ Bana, *Harsha Charita*. (Cowell's Ed.), p. 100.

² Beal, *The Buddhist Records of the Western World*, Vol. I, p. xix.

³ Beal, *Life of Huien Tsiang*, p. 176, 177.

Harshavardhana's kingdom may be approximately defined as consisting of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, together with Bihar and a portion of the East Panjab, with the exclusion of a small strip of territory in the north-west corresponding to Huien Tsiang's Mo'-ti-pu-lo.¹ This moderate estimate of Harsha's Empire, which is in conformity with all contemporary evidence, is not accepted by those who imagine Harsha to have conquered almost the whole of North India,² and especially by those who, of late, have brought forward a theory which, while claiming for Harsha all the splendour of a world-conqueror, also attributes to him the conquest of South India. These say that his influence might have extended even as far as the Shimoga District in Mysore.³ In fact, it appears from a perusal of the reasons put forth by the exponents of the idea of Harshavardhana's southern conquests that that monarch was acting the rôle of a Samudragupta.

It must be admitted, however, that Harsha has solid claims to be called a great conqueror. As has been said already, Huien Tsiang informs us that Harsha conquered the Five Indies, although in the opinion of Dr. Muzumdar neither Bana nor Huien Tsiang can be fully relied upon in this particular instance. "On general grounds there is no greater reason to look upon these statements of Huien Tsiang as literally true or even more reliable than the pompous phrases of Bana. Besides, the absurdity of the claim that Harshavardhana brought the Five Indies under allegiance may be convincingly demonstrated, for it is unanimously held that the whole of India south of the Vindhya — — — — — amarupa, the Panjab, — — — — — were never — — — — — Huien Tsiang's

¹ Dr. Shama Sastry, *The Mysore Archaeological Report for 1923*, p. 83.
² S. Srikanta Sastri, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1926*, p. 487.
³ Niharanjan Ray, *Journal of the Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. III,

life it is said that he made himself master of India. "He was soon able to avenge the injuries received by his brother, and to make himself master of India. His renown was spread abroad everywhere, and all his subjects revered his virtues. The empire having gained rest, then the people were at peace. On this he put an end to war-like expeditions and began to store up in the magazines the lances and swords. He gave himself up to religious duties.....Every fifth year he convoked a grand assembly of deliverance (Mahāmōksha-parishad) and distributed the stores of his treasures in charity."¹

Before I deal with the supposed notion of Harsha's Dig-Vijaya or world-conquest, a few words will be said about his early expeditions which put him, as his chroniclers have pictured him, on a war-footing. He received military training in the northern wars which his elder brother conducted against the Hunas.² It was the news of his brother's death at the hands of the treacherous Gowda King which set the warlike impulse in Harsha working to the highest pitch. Both Bana and Huiien Tsiang agree on this point. The former tells us that Harsha took a great vow on the advice of Simhanada, to clear the land of the Gowdas in a limited number of days.³ This war which Harsha undertook against the Gowda King to avenge the death of his brother may be termed the first expedition of Harsha. "The starting place was fixed at a large temple built of reeds not far from the city and close to the Sarasvati."⁴ One of the very first happy coincidences which Harsha met with was the desire of the heir-apparent of Kamarupa, Bhaskaravarma, for friendship with Harsha. He sent an envoy from Assam, Hamsagada, and about the presence of the royal army against Gowda, Bana is very eloquent. Harsha "thenceforth

¹ Beal, *Life of Huiien Tsiang*, p. 83. Cf. "Privatissima" (Narayan's Ed.) Introd. xxxii; Niharajan Ray, *O.C.*, Vol. III, p. 770.

² Bana, *O.C.*, p. 132.

³ Bana, *O.C.*, pp. 186, 187. Beal, *Life of Huiien Tsiang*, *O.C.*, p. 83.

⁴ Bana, *O.C.*, p. 198.

⁵ Bana, *O.C.*, p. 221.

advanced by ceaseless marches against the foe."¹ But grave news suddenly stopped the progress of the army. Bhaṇḍi, who had been away to Malwa, arrived with the painful news of Rajyaśrī's confinement in the Vindhya. Hearing this Harsha placed Bhaṇḍi in command saying—"Where she has gone, I myself abandoning all other calls, will go. Your honour also must take the army and advance against the Gowda."² Thus the first expedition was broken up into two campaigns—one which was led by Bhaṇḍi against the King of Gowda, Śaśāṅka, and the other led by Harsha himself to rescue Rajyaśrī.³

Now, where was the place where the Princess had taken refuge? After inspecting the booty which Bhaṇḍi had brought from Malwa,⁴ Harsha on the next day "set out with the horse in search of his sister, and in a comparatively few days reached the Vindhya forest referred to."⁵ So it must be noted that it did not take a very long time for Harsha to reach the Vindhya forest. Roaming hither and thither for many days he at last fell in with a forest chief, who led him to a great sage, and with their aid he was able to rescue his sister as she was on the point of committing suicide.⁶ Where did Harsha go to after the happy termination of his Vindhyan expedition? He went back to his capital, which was not far from the place where Rajyaśrī had taken shelter. This is evident from the account of Harsha's return as given by Bana. "Pleased at the way in which the other so warmly accepted his friendship, the king after staying there that night, the next morning dismissed Nirghāta, well satisfied with gifts of garments and ornaments, took his sister with the holy man and went back in a few marches to his

bank of the Ganges."⁷ That this

camp could refer to no other place except his capital can be inferred from the location of Kanyakubja as given by Huiien Tsiang. "The capital which had the Ganges on its west side, was about twenty li in length by four or five li in breadth."¹

The following conclusions may be gathered from the above:—1. That the campaign in the Vindhyan forests did not last for a long time; Harsha reached the Vindhya in a few days, roamed in the forest for some days, and in a few days' march reached his camp stationed on the Ganges. This camp is to be identified with the main part of the army kept ready in the capital itself.

2. No other campaign could have been undertaken by Harsha during the short time which he took to march to the Gowda land, turning swiftly to the Vindhya to rescue his sister. Any assumption, therefore, on our part that Harsha undertook to wage war against, say, the Malwa king, or that he came into conflict, as for example, with Pulakeśi II. at this juncture, would be a statement which could not have the support of either the learned court-poet or of the shrewd foreign traveller. Bana's narrative, as I have already remarked, ends with the story of the rescue of Rajyaśri, and of the return of Harsha to the Ganges.² The first expedition, therefore, originally led by Harsha himself was broken up into the Gowda campaign under Bhaṇḍi, and the western campaign in the Vindhya under Harsha himself. The latter terminated successfully within a few days; the former directed against a powerful foe dragged on, we conjecture, over a greater period, and necessitated the appearance of Harsha again in the eastern theatre.

Herein are to be remembered two small facts which may be utilized in the explanation of an all-vow which Harsha had taken --to clear the land in a short time-- was still left unfilled. The great sorrow in the Vindhya.

promise, that of assuming the red robes on the fulfilling of his vow against the Gowda king. "... but I also made a vow in the presence of all the world, why I bound myself to obey my right arm which was uplifted to destroy the insolent enemies who had slain my brother: and unable to endure the insult offered, I surrendered my whole soul to righteous vengeance. . . . From this day forth, while I discharge my vow, I desire that she should remain at my side and be comforted with your righteous discourse, and your passionate instruction which produces salutary knowledge, and your advice which calms the disposition, and your Buddhist doctrines which drive away worldly passions. And in the end, when I have accomplished my design, she and I will assume the red garments together. What will not the magnanimous grant to a suppliant?"¹

War with the Gowda king had, therefore, to be renewed. But if Harsha was pre-occupied with the campaigns in the east and in the Vindhya, when was he crowned king? Did he undertake the first expedition before he was crowned king or after? Did he possess the status of Maharaja, and of the Lord of the Northern Way before he reached the Vindhya? These questions will now be examined.

In the matter of Harsha's coronation, we are to follow the narrative of Bana rather than that of Hsien Tsiang for the simple reason that the former being the court-poet was an eye-witness to the proceedings at the court: while the Chinese pilgrim came to Harsha's court only towards the end of that monarch's reign, and therefore, could only have written from sources which were perhaps in some sense secondary. This does not preclude us, however, from accepting the news of the coronation of Harsha, especially about the ~~fact~~ ^{fact} that monarch was busy subduing the ~~eastern~~ ^{eastern} ~~front~~ ^{front} from "Harshacharita" that ~~he~~ ^{he} was crowned king before he set out on his eastern ~~front~~ ^{front} ~~that~~ ^{that} this great event took place ~~at~~ ^{at} much ado ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~commander-in-chief of~~ ^{commander-in-chief of}

his brother, Bhaṇḍi, was not in the capital when it was celebrated. We know that Rajyavardhana left Harsha behind him, and that he himself with a small army went to punish the Malwa king.¹ Before Rajyavardhana set out on his western campaign, he thought of transferring the sovereignty of the land to his younger brother, since he himself, being grievously afflicted with the news of his father's death, wanted to assume the robes of a sanyasi. "I desire, therefore, in a hermitage to purge, with the pure waters of pellucid streams that run from mountain tops, this fond defilement which clings to my mind as to a garment. Therefore do you receive from my hands the cares of sovereignty, a gift not high esteemed indeed and reft of the joy of youth, like old age, which Puru welcomed at his father's will."² Rajyavardhana's anxiety to crown his brother can only be understood when we remember that Kanyakubja was at that time surrounded by hostile kings, as will be evident from the undertaking of Harsha himself; and Rajyavardhana must certainly have thought it a hazardous undertaking to leave behind him a state without a ruler, when he himself with the pick of his army was away to avenge the wrong done to the royal house of Pushpabhuti. The desire to lead a life of an ascetic, therefore, was suddenly changed into the determination of a conqueror when Rajyavardhana hearing the sad plight of his sister Rajyaśri, seized the sword which he had thrown away, and vowed to uproot the kingdom of Malwa.³ "Let all kings and elephants stay with you," Rajyavardhana said to Harsha.⁴ Are we to assume that Bhaṇḍi was left behind? The answer is to be found in the concluding speech of Rajyavardhana—"Let all kings and elephants stay with you. Only Bhaṇḍi here must follow me with some ten thousand horse."

1. Bana, O.C.

2. Bana, O.C.

3. Bana, O.C.

4. Bana, O.C.

5. Bana, O.C.

place afterwards, it is evident, that Bhaṇḍi, because he was an intimate companion of Rajyavardhana,¹ and more because of his being the commander-in-chief, perhaps, of Rajyavardhana's army, accompanied his master to Malwa.² But Huien Tsiang makes us believe that Bhaṇḍi was in the capital when the coronation of Harsha took place. After writing about the treacherous conference called by the Gowda king, Huien Tsiang continues—"The people having lost their ruler, the country became desolate. Then the great minister Poni (Bhaṇḍi), whose power and reputation were high and of much weight," addressed the assembled on the necessity of their crowning Harsha.³ This would mean that Bhaṇḍi was present at the capital when Harsha was crowned. The statement of Huien Tsiang might be interpreted to mean that Bhaṇḍi returned soon after the Malwa war to be in the capital when the great event was celebrated. But there are a few considerations against the supposition of Bhaṇḍi ever having been in the capital. In the matter of the coronation, as has been said already, Bana is more reliable than Huien Tsiang. The poet, who knows Bhaṇḍi very well, having already introduced him as the play-mate brought in by the brother of Queen Yasovati,⁴ does not speak of Bhaṇḍi but speaks of another commander, Simhanada. It is reasonable to believe that Simhanada, who was "a friend of his (Harsha's) father also,"⁵ who was a soldier "foremost in every fight"⁶ and a man who was "far advanced in years," might have been more instrumental in celebrating the coronation of Harsha than Bhaṇḍi who, though he had been brought up as a playmate of both Rajyavardhana and Harsha himself, might have

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7. Mookerjee, *Op. cit.* pp. 18, 19 (note).

that the statement in Huien Tsiang can be understood to mean that Bhaṇḍi returned to Malwa to be ready for the coronation, we have to remember that Rajyavardhana's return from his northern campaign against the Hunas, the death of his father, and the sudden death of Grahavarina, followed each other in quick succession, and that the campaign against Malwa was brought to a speedy termination after a short struggle. There seems to have been but little interval between the end of Rajyavardhana's expedition against Malwa and his preparations for a campaign against Gowda. It is extremely doubtful if Bhaṇḍi, who met Harsha when the latter had already begun his eastern march, was ever in the capital when Harsha was crowned king.

The news of his brother's death at the hands of the cruel Śaśanka compelled Harsha, I may be permitted to repeat, to take up arms. From the "Harshacharita", as I have just now said, we are to presume that Harsha was already crowned king on the death of his brother. The State hemmed in as it was on all sides with relentless foes, was without a ruler. In his proclamation to the people, Harsha tells us that he was indeed a great king. "Let all kings prepare their hands to give tribute or grasp swords to seize the realms of space or chowries, let them bend their heads or their bows, grace their ears with either my commands or their bow strings, crown their heads with the dust or with helmets, join suppliant hands or troops of elephants, let go their hands or their arrows, grace mace-staves or lance-staves, take a good view of themselves in the nails of my feet or the mirror of their swords. I am gone abroad. Like a cripple, how can I

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interpreted as favourable indications of his successful conquests. He desired to stamp the earth with the single seal of his sole command. "That day he spent in the same place, and when night arrived, complimented all the kings and retired to rest."¹ Here it might be pointed out that those kings were the feudatories of his brother, and that the name of "kings" might not signify anything of importance. In the "Harsha-charita", however, there is another proof of Harsha having been crowned. The poet introduces to us a cautious character in the shape of Skandagupta, who enumerated to the king numerous examples of monarchs who had met with their death at the hands of secret enemies.² Then the poet says that His Majesty Harsha after the withdrawal of Skandagupta "complied with all the forms of royalty."³ This phrase might or might not be interpreted to mean that Harsha took upon himself the duties and insignia of a monarch. But Bana makes it quite clear that Harsha was accompanied by many kings in his campaign against Gauda; and we are to assume that Harsha could only have had a large royal retinue after his coronation and not when he was a prince. "Then as the company of kings bowed, with bodies dutifully bent down, hearts thrilling with fear, heads all agleam with the light of golden diadems whose gems were loosened by their motions, and crests emitting dust from tossing flowers, the rays of their blazing crest jewels, waving downwards, aslant and upwards, seemed like flocks of jays engaged in producing fair omens."⁴

Befitting the royal dignity of his master, Bana always speaks of him as a king.⁵ This, however, may be explained because Bana, being a courtier, was bound to speak of his royal patron thus, and not as a prince. Admitting, nevertheless, this weakness on the part of Bana, one is led to believe that Harsha must have been crowned king before he set out on his first campaign against

¹ Bana, O.C., p. 1.

² Bana, O.C., p. 1.

Bana, O.C., pp. 204-205.

Cf. Muzumdar, O.C., p. 316.

Gauda. In the light of all this, it is difficult to believe that Harsha ruled conjointly with his sister.¹ This suggestion, it must be remembered, comes not from Huien Tsiang, but from Fang-Chih. Further, Harsha's sister was away in Malwa just about the time Harsha set out on his campaign against Gauda. Where Rajyavardhana thought of going to the west to punish the Malwa king, he did not think, we may be sure, of bestowing on Harsha a divided sovereignty, which, shrewd as he was, he knew to be incompatible with the precarious condition of his principality. As to how Fang-Chih came across this piece of news remains yet to be proved. It can only be reconciled by saying that Harsha did not rule over the territory over which Grahavarma ruled and that even after becoming the Lord of all the Northern Way, he ruled over it in the name of his sister.

Now the question arises—did Harsha also assume imperial titles before going to the Gauda-deśa? According to the story of the image of Bodhisatva, he was almost commanded by it not to assume the title of Maharaja. "Ascend not the lion-throne," it concluded, "and call not yourself Maharaja."² Even supposing that this story of the Bodhisatva image can be attributed to a man who saw the monarch long after, when the latter was deep under the influence of Buddhism—which, however, Harsha felt for the first time creeping over him while he was in the Vindhya forest in the presence of the great sage, Divākaramitra, and not while the fever of war was on him when he was marching against Gauda—there are certain considerations which prompt one to reject the

was handed over to Harsha, and therefore, Harsha would never have pretended to assume imperial titles. Further, we have the fact that there were kings outside his territory who had refused to acknowledge him as their over-lord; and it was precisely to subdue these that he spent the first six years of his reign in warfare. It cannot be believed that he ever took upon himself imperial titles before he had subdued all those who were hostile to him.

This brings us to the topic of Harsha as a conqueror of the four quarters of the world—a question with which is connected the subject of his southern conquests, and of his defeat at the hands of the great western Chalukya king, Pulakeśi II. The theory of Harsha's southern conquests can be understood only in the light of his "world-conquest". Hence I shall deal with Harsha's Dig-Vijaya first and then, shall come to the topic of Harsha's supposed sojourn in the south.

Dr. Muzumdar has well endeavoured to argue that Harsha can in no sense be called master of even the whole of North India.¹ To a large extent this is true but it would be worth while to see whether or not Harsha had any idea of setting forth on a "Dig-Vijaya" in his mind on his accession to the throne. Opinion is divided among the translators of Huien Tsiang as to the warlike intentions of Harsha. Huien Tsiang, according to Beal, describes Harsha as conquering the Five Indies in the first six years of his reign, and then spending the remaining thirty years also in continual warfare.

After his... or teachers of the art... They had a host of 5,000 elephants, a host of 2,000 cavalry, and 510,000 foot soldiers. He went from east to west, conquering all who... the elephants were not harnessed, nor the soldiers... (unhelmeted). After six years he had subdued the Five Indies. Having thus enlarged his realm he increased his forces: he had 60,000

war-elephants, and 100,000 cavalry. After thirty years his arms reposed, and he governed everywhere in peace."¹ Against this Watters raises a most reasonable objection in the following terms, and does not agree with the interpretation of Harsha's spending the next thirty years of his reign in continual warfare. "Our pilgrim has expressly stated that the king's conquests were completed within six years, and it is against text and context to make him represent the king fighting continually for thirty or thirty-six years."² We shall see from contemporary evidence that Watters is more correct than Beal. For the present we shall note only two points:—

First, that Harsha was on the war-path immediately after his accession;

Second, that his wars in Northern India kept him engaged for six years.

Bana is more explicit as regards Harsha's going on a "Dig-Vijaya". Moreover, even in the drama attributed to Harsha himself, we have evidence to prove that that monarch had imperialistic designs in his mind. Here we may find the truth of Huien Tsing's remark that Harsha went a-conquering the Five Indies during the first six years of his reign. Counsellors were not wanting, I suppose, in the court of Harsha to tell him about the classical examples of monarchs who had gone on a conquest of the four quarters of the world. The memory of Samudra-Gupta still lived in the minds of monarchs. The existence of too many states, writes Dr. Mookerjee, was one of the reasons of Harsha's starting on a

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Watters, O.C.

Mookerjee, O.C., p.

army,¹ Bana does not, except for a poetic description of the camp, give any estimate of Harsha's army before he started on his supposed world-conquest.² We shall enumerate all the evidence for the world-conquest of Harsha as given in the "Harshacharita" and in the play composed by Harsha himself.

(1) Rajyavardhana consoles Harsha when the latter persisted in his prayers to accompany him on his chastising campaign against Malwa, thus—

"Moreover, for the province of your prowess you have already the earth with her amulet wreath of eighteen countries.....For a world-conquest you, like Māndhātṛi, shall grasp, in the shape of your bow with its curving frame adorned with bright gold, a comet portending the world's end of all earthly kings."³

(2) On hearing the news of the death of Rajyavardhana at the hands of the treacherous Śaśinka, the great war-lord Simhanada says—

"Think not, therefore, of the Gauda king alone, so deal that for the future no other follow his example. Wave the chowries of those mock conquerors, those would-be lovers of the whole earth, by the sighs of the matrons in their harems.Now that the king has assumed his godhead and Rajyavardhana has lost his life by the sting of the vile Gauda serpent, you are, in the cataclysm which has come to pass, the only Ṣeṣha left to support the earth."⁴

(3) When this lion of war, Simhanada, had finished his speech, Harsha issued a proclamation to all the people, as far as the orient hill, whose summit the Gaṇḍhārva pairs alight on when alarmed by the hustle of the sun's chariot wheels, as far as Sāvēri (a mountain in Lanka, Ceylon) where the calamity of Rama's devastation of Ceylon was graven by his hewing down the capital Triakuta—as far

Bana, *O.C.*, Vol. 2, p. 313; Watters, *O.C.*, I, p. 343.

Bana, *O.C.*, p. 1.

Bana, *O.C.*, p. 1.

Bana, *O.C.*, p. 1.

as the western mount, the hollows of whose caves resound with the tinkling anklets of Varuna's intoxicated stripping mistresses—as far as Gandhamādana, whose cave dwellings are perfumed with fragrant sulphur used as scent by the Yaksha matrons, let all kings prepare their hands to give tribute or grasp swords."¹

(4) The poet himself while describing Harsha, after the latter had listened to the counsel of the intelligent commander of elephants, Skandagupta, says—

"His Majesty Harsha complied with all the forms of royalty. But while he, according to his vow, was commencing his march for a world-conquest, in the abodes of the doomed neighbouring kings, manifold portents spread abroad."² Then again while speaking about the expedition against Gauda, Bana says—

"Some days having passed, on a day with care calculated and approved by a troop of astronomers numbering hundreds, was fixed an hour of marching suitable for the subjugation of all the four quarters."³

(5) Harsha while on the march eastwards, meets with a village notary, and interpreting the evil omens as good signs, says—"The omen signifies that the earth shall be stamped with the single seal of my sole command."⁴

(6) Even the princes who accompanied the king could not help talking loudly about the world-conquest of Harsha. When he arrived at the encampment, he heard the princes giving vent to their zeal in the following manner—"It was the famous Māndhātrī who opened the way to world-conquest. With the irresistible onset of his arms, he set the world at peace. He is to the brave but a child. Persia is only a span, Caka realm but a rabbit's track. He won at the price of a value."⁵

HARSHAVARDHANA IN THE KARNATAK.

By B. A. SALETORÉ, ESQ., M.A.

(Continued.)

II

THESE ideas of a Dig-Vijaya are reflected in the "Ratnāvali", a drama written by Harsha.

(i) In the reply given by Vasubhūti, the ambassador of the king of Simhala, to King Vatsa the king of Kausambhi, it is evident that the latter desired to marry Ratnāvali in order that he might become the emperor of the world.

".....In consequence of the prophecy of the seer, that whoever should wed Ratnāvali, my master's daughter, should become the emperor of the world, your Majesty's minister, as you are aware, solicited her for your bride."¹

(ii) From the speech of Yaugandharāyaṇa the same idea can be gathered.

"Please, Your Majesty, to be seated, and I will tell you. It was formerly announced to us by a holy seer that the husband of the princess of Simhala should become the emperor of the world; we, therefore, earnestly applied to her father to give her hand to our sovereign; but unwilling to be the cause of uneasiness to the queen, the monarch of Simhala declined compliance with our request....."²

(iii) The concluding portion of the king's speech bears witness to the same idea.

"What more is necessary? Vikramabāhu is my kinsman. Sāgarikā, the essence of the world, the source of universal victory, is mine; and Vāsavadatta rejoices to obtain a sister. The Kosalas are subdued: what other object does the world present for which I could entertain a wish?"³

When we couple what Bana has said together with the assertions of Harsha himself and with those of Huien Tsiang

¹ Wilson, *The Theatre of the Hindus*, II, p. 310.

² *Ibid.*, II, p. 315.

³ *Ibid.*, II, p. 317.

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pt. II

with the fact of Harsha's being called the Lord of all the Northern Way (Uttarāpatha) even in the Inscriptions of Southern India, we may give credit to the belief that Harsha did entertain, at the beginning, imperialistic designs, and that he did spend a part of his reign in extensive conquests in northern, eastern, and western India. But here, however, our supposition ends.

Before I give some reasons for rejecting the idea of a Dig-Vijaya by Harsha, and consequently of the idea of his having ever come to the south, it would be better if we understand the position taken by those who believe in the southern campaigns of Harsha.¹

The following may be given as the reasons for saying that Harsha came as far as Mysore :—

1. The internal evidence in the "Harshacharita".
2. The fact of Harsha being called "Lord of all the Northern Way".
3. The existence of a couplet in Sanskrit supposed to have been written by a man called Mayūra, *supposed* to have been the father-in-law of Bana.² In this couplet it is said that Harsha conquered the Choḷa, Dravida, and Karnataka countries.
4. And finally, the discovery of a Viragal in the Shimoga District of Mysore, in which it is stated that Silāditya's general fell fighting against a Bēḍar king, causing, though, the flight of Mahendra.³

1. At the very outset it may be noted that in the "Harsha-charita" we have a hint as to the line of action which Harsha intended to take after fulfilling his vow. The ashram of the great sage Divākaramitra cast a spell on the king, who after the completion of his vow, as we have already seen, intended to take to the red robes much in the same way as his sister promised to do then and there in the presence of the

¹ S. Srikanta Sastri, *J.R.A.S.*, 1926, p. 487.

² Niharanjan Ray, *O.C.*, p. 78 *seq.*

³ Dr. Sāma Sastry, *M.A.R.*, 1923, p. 83.

great ascetic.¹ This may explain why "every fifth year he convoked a great assembly of deliverance (Mahā-moksha-parishad) and distributed the stores of his treasures in charity."²

As against this it may be argued that the same objection which was put forth in the case of Huien Tsiang, *viz.*, that the information might have been based more on hearsay rather than on personal observation, might also be raised against the writer of the "Life of Huien Tsiang" who compiled this "Life" many years perhaps after Harsha's death. But as I shall have an occasion to say, Huien Tsiang himself bears witness to the great "Mahā-moksha-parishad", and in this instance, there cannot be a doubt as to the sixth quinquennial assembly held towards the end of Harsha's reign.³

2. Admitting all objections against the writer of the "Life," let us take Huien Tsiang's testimony. Huien Tsiang visited Harsha towards the end of his reign. He mentions various parts of India, and when he comes to Maharashtra he speaks of the unsuccessful attempt made by Harsha to subjugate Pulakesi, the great western Chalukya king.⁴ The Chinese pilgrim describes Andhra,⁵ Dhanakataka, Chola, Dravida, Kanchi, Malakuta, Malaya, Mount Potalaka, Konkanapura, Simhala, and then Maharashtra over which ruled Pulakesi II. If the memory of Harsha's invasion of the south was as green in the minds of the people of the Dravida land proper, as it was in Maharashtra, Huien Tsiang would not have failed to remark about Harsha's advent into the south. If Huien Tsiang could have noted a defeat which took place, as I shall presently endeavour to prove, nearly thirty years before the date of his visit to the court of Harsha, he could as well have noted the news of the southern conquests of Harsha about the same time. An objection might be raised against this—that Huien Tsiang never personally visited the Chola and

¹ Bana, O.C., pp. 257-58.

² Beal, *Life of Huien Tsiang*, p. 83.

³ Max Müller, *Indian Antiquary*, XII, p. 232.

⁴ Beal, O.C., II, pp. 256-57.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 217-53.

Dravida lands, and therefore, could never have known about an event which did not shed honour on the bravery of the southern people. In the Chola and Dravida lands people were silent because of the victories of Harsha, and so Huiien Tsiang could not have known about them; while in the Maharashtra the people were glad because of the defeat suffered by Harsha, which they remembered not only in their own generation but for hundreds of years to come. This sounds plausible enough. But on a closer examination we shall see that the people of the Chola, Dravida and Karnataka lands, especially near-about Shimoga, did not know anything about Harsha because he never came to the south.

The entire supposition of Harsha's southern conquests rests on a clear understanding of his relation with Pulakesin II. Dr. Muzumdar writes:—

“It seems, therefore, very probable that in his attempt to chastise the king of Malwa, Harshavardhana found himself confronted by a hostile confederacy of powers in and round Gujerat peninsula. Harsha probably scored some successes at first, for, as referred to above, the king of Vallabhi had to seek the protection of the Gurjara king of Broach against him. But the confederacy soon gained the alliance of the great Chalukyan king Pulakesi II and Harsha's discomfiture was complete.”¹ Dr. Mookerjee is of the same opinion. “Probably this conflict was brought about only by the aggression of Harsha, who after vanquishing Dhruvasena II, king of Vallabhi, felt tempted to extend his conquests still further and try conclusions with Pulakesin II, whose dominions he had to invade in the course of his conquests running smooth and uninterrupted so long.”² Mr. Niharanjan Ray is uncertain as to when Harsha came to the south—whether before or after his defeat at the hands of Pulakesi. “It is difficult to ascertain whether this advance of Harsha into the interior of the south was made before his defeat by Pulakesi or after. It might be that Harsha, like Samudragupta, entered the south first

¹ Muzumdar, *O.C.*, p. 317.

² Mookerjee, *O.C.* p. 33.

by the eastern gate, and elated with success in his raid in eastern Deccan, tried to repeat the same in the west, where he met with an ignominious and disastrous defeat; or the order was quite the reverse, that is, being first defeated by Pulakesi II, he tried his luck in the east, and met with success."¹

3. To have some idea of Harsha's advent into the south, let us examine the third argument brought forward by the exponents of the theory of Harsha's southern conquests—the couplet attributed to Mayūra. It runs thus:—

Bhūpālāḥ Śasibhāskarānvayabhuvāḥ kenam nāsāditāḥ |
Bhartāram ṣunar ēkamēva hi bhuvastvām deva manyā
mahe |

Yenāṅgam ṣarimṛṣya Kuntalamathākṛṣya vyudasyā
yatam |

Colam prāpya ca madhyadesāmadhunā Kāncyām karah
*pātitaḥ."*²

At the very outset it may be noted that the fact of Mayūra being the father-in-law of Bana is questioned by Mr. Sastri himself. It would have been better if more tangible evidence were given about the identity of Mayūra, and about the exact source from where this couplet was taken. But a reason which prompts me to reject this couplet, even granting that all that has been said about Mayūra to be correct, is the relationship of Mayūra with Bana. There is nothing strange in a father-in-law making public the fact of his son-in-law holding a very high post, like the one which Bana held at the court of Harsha. If this be granted, we may easily understand why Mayūra was so loud in his praise of Harsha—the greater was the fame of Harsha as the conqueror of the whole world, the greater would be the name of Bana as the court poet of a renowned royal patron. The evidence of the couplet may be rejected on the ground that it was written by an uncertain author, more with the idea of making his son-in-law loom large in public estimation than with the idea of

¹ N. Ray, *O.C.*, 789.

² Sastri, *J.R.A.S.*, *O.C.*

commemorating the victories of a monarch under whose benevolence the talented poet lived. It can only be regarded, therefore, as "praise in the conventional exaggerated style of a poet given to punning and without any reference to historical accuracy."¹

4. We shall now have to examine the last point upon which the supposition that Harsha came to the south is based. The Viragal, as it appears in the *Mysore Archæological Report* for 1923, is as follows²:—

"While Silāditya, the light of the quarters, the most powerful, and a thorn in the way of the bravest, ascended the throne of his empire, Pettāṇi Satyāṅka, a brave soldier capable of destroying his enemies in the battle-field, pierced through the thick of the battle with the brave Bēdara Rāya, so as to cause frightfulness to Mahendra, and reached the abode of Svarga. Whoever preserves the field of crops (gifted to his relations) attains good and he who removes it will be guilty of five great sins."

In the original the inscription begins thus:—

"*Svasti Śrī Śīla-adityan disām-bharggan ākevāḷan aggaḷa Kantakan perālke vare Pettāṇi Satyāṅkan attuvala bhaṭan bedare Mahendran Bēdara rāyara Malappara Kāḷeguḍule viṛidu Svarggālayakkēridan beḷeya māḷa Kādon Kalyāṇam akke alivon paṇcha ma.*"³

Dr. Shama Sastry commenting on the above writes:—

"The inscription is in old Kannada characters, the formation of which is quite similar to those of the seventh century A.D. It is a Viragal or memorial stone set up to commemorate the death of one Pettāṇi Satyāṅka, a commander of the army of Silāditya, in his fight with a tribe of hunters forming the army of Mahendra. The inscription supplies no clue to ascertain who the Silāditya and the Mahendra mentioned in it were. On palæographic grounds I am inclined to identify the Silāditya of the inscription with

¹ *J.R.A.S., Loc. Cit.*

² *M.A.R.*, 1923, p. 83.

³ *Ibid.*

Harshavardhana-Silāditya and the Mahendra with Mahendrarman I of the Pallavas, the contemporary of Pulakesin II of the western Chalukyas. It is not improbable that Harshavardhana's rule extended as far as Shimoga. The spelling of Silāditya as Sila-ā-ditya is, however, inexplicable."¹

And both Mr. S. Srikanta Sastri and Mr. Niharanjan Ray base their remarks on the identification of Silāditya with Harshavardhana and of Mahendra with Mahendrarman, the Pallava king, as given by Dr. Shama Sastry. With the latter, *viz.*, the identification of Mahendrarman, I am not concerned for the present. But it appears to me that both Mr. Sastri and Mr. Ray have not quoted the inscription, or at least one important clause in it, as it appears in the *Mysore Archaeological Report* just cited. Mr. Sastri, whom Mr. Ray follows, has wrongly inserted the phrase "when Harsha came conquering, and Mahendra fled in fear", where it ought to be "*while Silāditya, etc., ascended the throne of his Empire, Pettanī Satyānka, etc., pierced through etc., so as to cause frightfulness to Mahendra.*" (The italics are mine.) I do not know what justification one could have in inserting the clause which Mr. S. Sastri has used for the correct interpretation given by Dr. Shama Sastry.

With this remark we shall look further into the Gaddemane Viragal. Viragals, as is well known, are not in the nature of elaborate inscriptions, and therefore, many of the details about the kings are missing in the Viragal. Śilāditya, mentioned in the Gaddemane Viragal does not refer to Harshavardhana of the North. The following are the reasons :—

1. There is nothing in the name of the king mentioned in the Viragal, except the word Śilāditya, to warrant our supposition that it refers to Harshavardhana. True Harsha was called Śilāditya. This we have on the authority of Huien Tsiang.² (But Huien Tsiang also gives another title assumed by Harsha, Kumāra. Moreover, Śilāditya was a name which was, as we shall see presently, common with certain

¹ *Ibid.*

² Beal, *O.C.*, I, p. 213.

western princes of India. But this is not the only objection. Harsha was known either by the name of Harshavardhana or Sri Harshavardhana in all the inscriptions of Southern India, not only of his own times but even of the times of the Rāstrakūtas. It cannot be believed that the name "Harsha" or "Sri Harsha" which was so very well known to the people of South India, could have been omitted in a Viragal,—which, as is supposed, is the only Viragal we have yet discovered, of Harsha in the South—by the sculptor who thought of giving only one of the two names which the Chinese pilgrim gives to Harsha.

2. If we compare the titles given in the Gaddemane Viragal with the titles given to Harsha either in the "Harsha-charita" or in the inscriptions, we fail to see why his name was not adorned by the same epithets in the South Indian Viragal as well. Bana gives the following titles to Harsha :—

"Of the king of kings, the lord of the four oceans, whose toe-nails are burnished by the crest gems of all other monarchs, the leader of all the emperors."¹ On the sonpat seal of Harsha, we have the titles as given below :—

"Paramabhaṭṭaraka and Mahārājādhirāja, the glorious Harshavardhana."² In the southern inscriptions, Harsha is often called "Lord of Uttarāpatha".

3. Let us study again a little of the situation in North India at the time of the accession of Harsha, in order to understand the significance of the phrase,—“While Śīlādityaascended the throne of the empire.” On the news of Prabhākara-vardhana's death, some feudatories seem to have rebelled against Thaneshvar. This is evident from the "Harshacharita". "My lord," the man with an effort said (to Rajyavardhana), "it is the way of the vile, like fiends, to strike where they find an opening. So, on the very day on which the king's death was rumoured, His Majesty Graha-varma was by the wicked lord of Malwa cut off from the living along with his noble deeds. Rājyaśrī also, the

¹ Bana, O.C., p. 40; Muzumdar, O.C., p. 316.

² *Corpus Indicarum*, II, p. 232.

princess, has been confined like a brigand's wife, with a pair of iron fetters kissing her feet, and cast into prison at Kanyakubja. There is, moreover, a report that the villain, deeming the army leaderless, purposes to invade and seize this country as well. Such are my tidings : the matter is now in the king's hands."¹ This was, however, but the beginning of the trouble. From Simhanada's speech we can gather something about the state of the kingdom. Says Simhanada :—

“Think not, therefore, of the Gauda king alone; so deal that for the future no other follow his example.....Remove the unhealthy rigidity of stiff unbending heads by forehead applications of sandal salve consisting of the gleam of toe-nails.....Like the autumn sun, set your forehead-burning footsteps upon the heads of kings.....Let your enemies with nail-scorching clouds of smoke from sighs all hot with the vexation of trembling crest gems, give your feet a dappled hue.....My lord's body, baked in the flame of humiliation, cannot without the cool application of the crimson sandal unguent of foes be relieved of this dire fever of pain.”² The very fact of Malwa's threatening to invade Thaneshvar shows us the dangerous condition of that kingdom. And Rājyavardhana refused, as we saw, to permit Harsha to accompany him in his western campaign, perhaps because, of another enemy in the east, the cruel Śaśānka of Gauda. Close on the heels, of the news of death of Rājyavardhana at the hands of Śaśānka, came the awful tidings of Rājyaśrī's flight to the Vindhya. Harsha was beset with insurmountable difficulties which might be summed up thus :—

(a) The immediate task of rescuing his sister ;

(b) The next urgent duty of taking revenge on the Gauda king ;

(c) And finally, the work of getting all those princes who had rebelled under his control.

¹ Bana, O.C., p. 173.

² Bana, O.C., p. 186.

In the face of such tremendous odds, it cannot be imagined that Harsha would have himself led an expedition, or as Mr. Srikanta Sastri says, that Harsha would have come conquering to the south; or that he would have sent a "brave soldier"—for that was what Pettanī Satyāṅka was, and not an officer of the status of a commander-in-chief—to the south, a region which being perfectly new, required greater tact than that which Harsha had shown in the subjugation of the east. If at all he came to the south, he would have come himself; and if he failed to come himself, he would have sent his most trusted general at the head of the southern expedition. But neither of the suppositions can be entertained because of the great difficulties which Harsha had to confront immediately on his accession.

If the Gaddemane Viragal inscription does not refer to Harshavardhana, then, to whom does it refer? The Viragal in all likelihood refers to the Valabhi kings of Saurashtra. The name Śīlāditya, the titles given to this monarch, the mention of the Sahyādrī mountains in the inscriptions of a Valabhi king, and finally, the similarity of the name of a Valabhi king, as found in inscriptions with that given by Huien Tsiang—all point out the fact that the Gaddemane Viragal was a memorial stone of the Valabhi kings, perhaps the only one of its kind as yet discovered in the Karnataka land.

1. *The name Śīlāditya.*—The name Śīlāditya, as it appears in the Viragal, strongly suggests that it belongs to the Valabhi kings amongst whom, more than in any other royal family in India, there were no less than eight Śīlādityas. It is true that the name Śīlāditya was also used by kings who were not of Valabhi. Huien Tsiang speaks of a Śīlāditya of Malwa, who lived sixty years before the date of the visit of the Chinese pilgrim.¹

2. It is not so much the name as the titles assumed by the king called Śīlāditya in the Gaddemane inscription, which make us believe that the Viragal belongs to the

¹ Beal, O.C., II, p. 261.

Valabhi kings. Among the titles given to the king in the Gaddemane inscription are the following :—

“Śrī Śīlāditya, the light of the quarters, the most powerful, and a thorn in the way of the bravest,” Even supposing we take a Śīlāditya (son of Dharasena II) who is said to have ruled about 653 A.D., some of his titles—“ who covered the whole horizon with multitudes of his wonderful virtues, which made the whole world rejoice, who carried a heavy burden of serious projects on the pedestal of his shoulders, the splendour of which was increased by the flashing of his sword, that possessed the lustre of victory in hundreds of battles”,¹ seem to be marked departures from the titles found on the Mysore Viragal—“ the light of the quarters, the most powerful, and a thorn in the way of the bravest.” One of the Valabhi kings, Śīlāditya V, the eighteenth king is said to have had the following titles :—

“ His (*i.e.*, Śīlāditya IV’s) son is the ardent devotee of Maheśvara, the great king of kings, the supreme lord, the illustrious Śīlādityadeva etc., etc.”²

Then again, the titles of a Sri Śīlāditya are given thus :—
“who by his prowess in delivering the great world, which was sinking under the waves of weight of the agitated sea of Kali, manifested his being an extraordinary excellent individual ; who thus was, as it were, a second philosopher’s stone, accomplishing the desires of all people ;who made a place for himself in the world,etc., etc.”³

The titles of Śīlāditya VI surnamed Dhruvabhata are given thus :—

“ His (*i.e.*, the fifth Śīlāditya’s) son is the ardent devotee of Maheśvara, the supreme sovereign, the great king of kings, supreme lord, the illustrious Śīlādityadeva, who meditates on the feet of the supreme sovereign, the great king of kings, supreme lord, the illustrious Bappa.”⁴

¹ *Ep. Ind.*, I, pp. 89-90.

² Bühler, *Ind. Ant.*, VI, p. 16.

³ *J. B. B. R. S.*, XI, pp. 354-55.

⁴ *Ind. Ant.*, VII, p. 80.

The titles given to Śilāditya I are the following :—

“ His (*i.e.*, Dharasena's) son was Śilāditya, the great Maheśvara, who meditated on his father's feet—who filled the circle of all the quarters by extraordinary virtues which were united in him, and which delighted the whole world—the burden of whose great desires was borne successfully by his shoulders, which were brighter than those of others, in consequence of his conspicuousness amongst the allies, who had obtained destruction by winning a hundred battles.”¹ It is not so much upon these titles which do not admit, I confess, of complete verification, that the identification of the Mysore Viragal with a viragal of the Valabhi kings depends as on the examination of the first *birudu* which the Valabhi kings took, and which is also found in the Mysore Viragal. It is the title of *Śri*. It may be pointed out that dwelling too much on the word *Śri* which is used so commonly in all inscriptions, will not be of much avail in the matter of proving our point. But it may also be noted that the title *Śri* was a peculiarity of the Valabhi kings, and that they had good reason to adopt it in the place of the other *birudus* found in all inscriptions. It is true that “*Śri*” is also used in connection with Harsha. But then we are to remember that Harsha is always called “*Śri Harsha*” in all southern inscriptions, and never “*Śri Śilāditya*”. With the Valabhi kings, at least with one branch of the family which was not of the main line, the *birudu Śri* stood for a royal title. “ But it ought to be noticed that the grantor Dhruvasena II, called also Balāditya, does not assume the title of ‘Maharaja’, and that none of his predecessors receive any epithet but ‘*Śri*,’ ‘the illustrious’. It may be that the omission is due to an accident, but considering the habitual grandiloquence of Indian princes, the case is suspicious, and it would not be surprising if it were found eventually that Dhruvasena II had some cogent reasons for being silent about his magnificence.”² We know that Harsha was called

¹ *Ind. Ant.*, I, p. 15.

² Buhler, *Ind. Anr.*, VI, p. 13.

Śilāditya only by the Chinese pilgrim;¹ but we know from epigraphical evidence that there was a line of kings that had the *birudu* of Śri attached to their names.

But here two objections are to be answered:—

1. If the Mysore Viragal is of the Valabhi dynasty, why is it that a very important clause—"worshipper at the feet of the Maheśvara," which is found in all Valabhi inscriptions—is not found in the Mysore inscription?

2. If the Gaddemane Viragal really belonged to the Valabhi kings, why is it that the title "Mahārājādhirāja" given to many of the Valabhi kings is not found in the Mysore inscription?

As has been already said, the Gaddemane Viragal is not of the type of an elaborate eulogy of monarchs written in the shape of an inscription. Moreover, the king, whom we shall try to identify with one of the Valabhi kings, was not of the royal line. He could not assume the title of "Mahārājādhirāja," for various reasons—hence he used only the "illustrious Śilāditya".

3. The third reason which might be put forward to prove that the Gaddemane inscription belonged to the Valabhi kings, is the fact of one of the Valabhi kings having conquered the Sahyādri mountains. Now it is known very well that the Sahyādri mountains stand for the Western Ghats.² One of the Valabhi kings is said to have been the "lord of the Earth, whose (*i.e.*, Earth's) two breasts are the Sahya and Vindhya mountains whose tops clothed in black clouds appear like (her) nipples."³ This was Derabhaṭa also called Śilāditya.

But here it must be confessed that the chronology of the Valabhi kings is by no means a settled question. Dr. Fleet writing on the supposed identification of Derabhaṭa with the Derabaṭa of Huien Tsiang has remarked:—

"These passages present points which must be carefully considered before any final opinion is arrived at in respect

¹ Beal, *Life*, p. 83. *Corpus Indicarum*, III, p. 39.

² *Vishnu Purāna*, p. 474, Dey, *Geographical Dictionary*, p. 171.

³ *J.B.B.R.A.S.*, p. 352. *Ep. Ind.*, I, p. 91.

of the identity of the person, or persons, intended by Huiien Tsiang; the more especially because the dates render it impossible that he should be Śīlāditya VII of Valabhi, the only one in the family for whom as yet we have obtained the second name of Dhruvabhāṭa; and because M. Julien tells us (*Ind. Ant.*, Vol. III, 163, note) that the Chinese translation of the name Dhruvapātu of Valabhi was Teh-'ang-Jou, 'constantly intelligent', which of course supports the supposition that the termination of the Sanskrit name, the first part of which *dhruva* means 'constant,' really was 'pātu' 'smart, dexterous, intellectual' rather than 'bhāṭa' 'warrior.'" ¹ Could it be that the Śīlāditya mentioned in the Gaddemane Viragal was one of the Śīlādityas of Valabhi, and especially could he have been the Śīlāditya mentioned by Rao Saheb Mandalik? The following facts suggest the identification, although at present I am not in a position to assert this identification with greater confidence—

(a) Śīlāditya who is supposed to have had the Vindhya and the Sahyādrī mountains as the two breasts of the Earth over which he ruled, was a great general.

(b) He was not of the direct royal line.

These two points might explain why being not of the main line, Śīlāditya did not use the *birudu* of "worshipper at the feet of Maheśvara" which is found in all the inscriptions of the Valabhi kings; and why he used, instead, only the "Śri" "the illustrious", thus keeping in conformity with practice of the Valabhi kings of appending the *birudu* of Śri to their names, and also with his position as a great commander. We are to imagine that there must have been some cause for the extension of the Valabhi arms into the Karnatak which we are not able to find out at present. This would explain why "a brave soldier capable of destroying enemies in the battle field," like Pettaṇi Satyāṅka, could in the thick of the battle with the Bēdara king, who could only have been one of the forest kings of the Sahyādrī mountains, give up his life for the sake of his master. That there is

¹ *Corpus Indicarum*. III, pp. 40-42.

nothing improbable in a very close connection between Karnataka and Saurashtra, may be gathered from the successful attempts made by the western Chalukya kings in founding a western Chalukya branch in Kathiawad, in the times of which we are studying. It is true that the Valabhi dynasty may be dated towards the end of the fifth century A.D., when Senāpati Bhaṭṭāraka rebelled against his master, the Gupta king (Skandagupta), and established himself at Valabhi, not far from Simhapura (modern Sihor).¹ Some would place this Bhaṭṭāraka, however, in 629 A.D.² The dynasty thus founded about 485 A.D. lasted till 765 A.D. with about nineteen kings in all.³ Admitting the possibility of a controversy about the exact relationship between the word "Chalukya", as it appears in the history of the western Chalukyas, with the word "Solanki" as it appears in the annals of Gujarat, there seems much justification in the statement that Jayasimha (the second son of Pulakeśi II), the younger brother of Vikramāditya, was probably given the province of Gujarat, and that thus Jayasimha "became the founder of the Gujarat Chalukyas."⁴ If this be accepted, we have a situation in Pulakeśi's times, i.e., in the times of Harshavardhana himself, in which the western Chalukyas made an attempt to carry their army into Gujarat. Could this have been done as a retaliatory measure by the great Pulakeśi's successors against the depredations the date of which we do not know, into the land of the Kanarese people? That the struggle between Pettanī Satyānka on the one hand, and the Beḍara Raya along with Mahendra on the other, was indeed a battle cannot be doubted. The Beḍara Raya I am unable to identify. About the identity of Mahendra we shall presently make a guess. We know very well that Pulakeśi swept his sword practically over the continent. We know too that

¹ *Arch. Survey of Western India* (Gujarat Architecture), Vol. VI, p. 3.

² Beal, *O.C.*, II, 26, note 72.

³ *Arch. Survey of Western India*, *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴ Bhagvanlal Indraji, *J.B.B.R.A.S.*, 5 XVI, ; *A.S.W.I.* (N.G.), (II)—Mulraja is given here as the founder of the Chalukyas in Gujarat.

the western Chalukyas held undisputed sway over the western parts of India, especially over Maharashtra and the Karnataka and Konkan, for a very long time after Pulakesi II, although they could not escape the challenge of many a powerful Karnataka dynasty.¹ It may be argued that the designs of Pulakesi's successors were merely the ambitious attempts of aggrandisement.

(To be continued.)



¹ Fleet, *Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts* (2nd Ed.).

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HARSHAVARDHANA IN THE KARNATAK.

BY DR. B. A. SALETORE, M.A., PH.D. (LOND.)

III

(Concluded.)

IT may be argued that the designs of Pulakeśi's successors were merely the ambitious attempts of aggrandisement to imitate the campaigns of their great king, Pulakeśi II. But it seems more reasonable to suppose that an attempt was made by one of the Valabhi kings, perhaps just before the western Chalukya branch was planted in Gujerat, under one of the kings called Śilāditya, to conquer, or to consolidate an earlier acquisition, the Sahyas, which were certainly within the jurisdiction of the western Chalukyas; and that either in the early years of Pulakeśi II himself, or more probably in the years closely following his death, his successors retrieved their lost honour by founding a branch of the western Chalukya dynasty in Gujerat. If this be accepted, then the Gaddemane Viragal might be placed in the seventh century—a supposition which explains the name of Śilāditya as found in the Viragal, the incursion of a general of that king into Karnataka, and especially the fact of the character of the letters being those of the seventh century A.D.¹

This would mean two things—

(a) The rejection of the identification of Mahendra as found in the Viragal with Mahendravarman, the Pallava king;

(b) The rejection of the attempts hitherto made of explaining the relation of Harśa with the western powers; and especially with Pulakeśi II. I shall first deal with the identity of Mahendra, although I must confess I shall still be in the sphere of suppositions.

The Pallava king, defeated by Pulakeśi II, was Mahendravarman I.² If Mahendra, who was frightened, as we see him in the Gaddemane Viragal, was Mahendravarman I, and if he

¹ My. Ar. Report, O.C., p. 8.

² *Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts* (2nd Ed.), 329; Dr J. Pallavas, p. 36.

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was the enemy of Pulakeśi, he would have made common cause with Harśa, when the latter came to the south conquering Pulakeśi's territories, against an enemy who had scored a great victory against Mahendravarman himself. But if the Gaddemane inscription is to be believed, Mahendra fled having been frightened by the bravery of Pettanī Satyānka. It cannot be that Mahendravarman fled both from Harśa and Pulakeśi. That would have been incompatible with the position of a great king held by Mahendravarman I. He is said to have had the title of "Śatrumalla".¹ And "A Wrestler amongst Foes" would have been the last person to take to his heels on the approach of an ordinary general. Moreover one would like to know, even supposing the identification of the Mahendra of the Gaddemane Viragal with Mahendravarman I were correct, what the reason was which made a Pallava king join hands with a petty chieftain and face a contingent under a dashing soldier, who was not even of the status of a commander. I say that the ally of Mahendra was only a petty chieftain. In the Viragal we have only "Bēḍara Raya" and not "Bēḍara Maharaya", nor "Bēḍara Daṇḍanāyaka". Would Mahendravarman I, king of the Pallavas, have allied himself with a mere forest king (the word Bēḍaru is generally applied to hunters in the Karnataka), only to be "frightened" by the courage of a "brave soldier"? It would have been disgraceful not only to Mahendravarman I as king of the Pallavas but also to the great tradition of the Pallavas who had successfully carried their flag into the Karnataka about the middle of the seventh century. Then, if Mahendra of the Mysore Viragal is not Mahendravarman I of the Pallava dynasty, with whom is he to be identified? I believe—but this is only a supposition for the present—that he may be identified with a Nolamba king called Mahendra. But here I must confess we have two difficulties—that of chronology, and that of having more than one Mahendra in the Nolamba, or rather a part of the Karnataka, history. It is

¹ *Ep. Ind.*, XII, p. 225; Rangachari: *A Topographical List of MS. in the Madras Presidency*, I, No. 339, p. 169.

true that, as I said just a while ago, the Pallavas established a branch of theirs in Nōlambavāḍi about the middle of the seventh century A.D.¹ But the history of the kings of Nōlambavāḍi as yet does not admit of clear discussion. Hence we find the name of Mahendra in 800 or thereabouts and also in A.D. 870. About 800 A.D. we have Nōlamba, the merciful-minded Cholu Perumāṇaḍigal and Mayindra (Mahendra) ruling with the Kiṟu-tore (little ruler) as their boundary, and being angry with Kaḍuvaṭṭi because of his having deceived them, and Vallevarasa Devaraya attacking the eastern guardian Baruma, and a fight.² In 878 A.D. Mahendra having pitched his camp in Bāragūr, and having succeeded in his scheme of sowing dissension among those outside his frontiers dependent on his original territory, rejoiced at having increased his kingdom and at having become a supreme king.³ About 870 there ruled Mahendra, and some persons were busy building tanks.⁴ This was the son of Poḷachōra Nōlamba by a Ganga princess, the sister of Nītimārga.² In 900 or thereabouts Mahendrāḍhirāya of the Pallavakula was ruling the Gangavāḍi Six Thousand.⁵ An inscription of Dilīpa Nōlamba, dated 943 A.D. mentions his grandfather, Mahendra who had "his two feet bending the crowns of hostile kings like a cow of plenty."⁶ There is another Mahendra whom we meet with while studying the relations of the Gangas with their neighbouring kings. The youngest brother of Rājamalla Satyavākya was Bhujagendra (who is also called Bhutarasa, Yuvaraja in 870), who gained victory over his enemy Mahendra in Hiriur (Chitaldroog District) and Sūlūr, and also in the Sāmiya battle.⁷ The son of Bhutugendra and Chandrōbbelabba was Ereyanga. This ruler slew Mahendra who attacked him. Mr. Rice has in almost all instances identified this Mahendra with the Pallava Nōlamba king, Mahendra, nephew of

¹ Fleet, *O.C.*, p. 318.

² *Ep. Carn.*, X, Sp. 39, p. 276.

³ *Ep. Carn.*, XII, Si. 38, p. 95.

⁴ *Ep. Carn.*, XI, Hr. 33, p. 108, *Ibid.*, Introd., p. 7.

⁵ *Ep. Carn.*, X, Bp. 64, p. 151.

⁶ *Ep. Carn.*, XII, Si. 28, p. 92.

⁷ *Ep. Carn.*, XII, Introd., p. 3.

Nītimārga.¹ One point suggests itself from the history of the Pallava Nalambas, and that is the following—that it was more probable for a king of the position of Mahendra of the Nalamba line to ally himself with a forest king than for a monarch of the status of Mahendravarman I, the Pallava king, who could have called feudatories of higher status to his aid. But the date given to Mahendra by Rice (800 A.D. till about 870), and that given to the Gaddemane inscription (seventh century) do not agree. This difficulty, however, does not preclude us from doubting the identity of the Mahendra of the Viragal with Mahendravarma, the Pallava king.

The attempts made hitherto of explaining the relations which Harśa had with the western powers, and especially with Pulakeśi II, also seem to be highly unsatisfactory. It has been said that Dadda II, king of Gujerat, gave protection to the lord of Valabhi, when the latter was defeated by the great lord or Parameśvara, the illustrious Harśadeva.² This has led scholars to surmise that from the year 633 till the year 642 or thereabouts, the western powers had leagued themselves against Harśa. Dr. Smith remarks—"The war with Valabhi, which resulted in the complete defeat of Dhruvasena (Dhruvabhaṭṭa) II, and the flight of that prince into the dominion of the Raja of Bharoach (Broach), who relied probably on the powerful support of the Chalukya monarch, seems to have occurred later than A.D. 633 and before Huien Tsiang's visit to western India in 641 or 642."³ Perhaps it is this which has led Dr. Muzumdar to write that the campaign against Valabhi was between the year 633 and 641 or 642 A.D.⁴ The following conclusions may be drawn from the above arguments of scholars :—

(a) That Harśa's campaign against Valabhi took place between 633 and 642 A.D. ;

(b) That this campaign resulted in a confederation of the princes of western India under Pulakeśi against Harśa ;

¹ *Ep. Carn.*, XII, Introd., p. 3.

⁴ Muzumdar, *O.C.*, p. 316.

² *Ind. Ant.*, XIII, p. 73.

³ Dr. Vincent Smith, *Early History of India*, p. 354.

(c) And that, therefore, the defeat which Pulakeśi inflicted on Harśa followed closely on the heels of the Valabhi campaign, somewhere between 633 and 642 A.D.

While it is true that the Valabhi campaign may be dated 633 A.D., it cannot be admitted that this war which Pulakeśi waged against Harśa, and which ended in the latter's famous defeat, took place in or nearabout 642 A.D. How much of indefiniteness there is about the exact date of the defeat of Harśa can be gathered from the remarks of scholars who have attempted to explain the subject. Dr. Fleet alone comes nearest to the date but, curiously enough, even he has failed to give us the exact date. Admitting the uncertainty about the relations of Harśa with the western powers, let us confine ourselves to his warfare with Pulakeśi. Dr. Smith writes, "This campaign may be dated about the year A.D. 620."¹ Dr. Mookerjee speaks about the defeat of Harśa but does not enlighten us as regards the exact date of the battle.² Dr. Maurice Ettinghausen writes in his *Harsha Vardhana* that the defeat of Harśa at the hands of Pulakeśi II might be placed between 610—634 A.D.³

None of those dates can be accepted when we examine the activities of Harśa towards the end of his reign. We have seen, how the militant ideas of a Digvijaya gave way before the nobler ones of Buddhism. Harśa was under the influence of Buddhism. His sister was with him. The promise which he had made while in the presence of the great sage of the Vindhyas must have been kept alive in his mind by his sister. We have it on the authority of Huien Tsiang that, as has been already remarked, he spent the first six years of his reign in warfare, and the next thirty in peace.⁴ From this same Chinese pilgrim we learn that "Once in five years he held the great assembly called Mōksha. He emptied his treasuries to give all away in charity, only reserving the soldiers' arms,

¹ Dr. V. A. Smith, *O.C.*, p. 353.

² Mookerjee, *O.C.*, pp. 32-33.

³ M. Ettinghausen, *Harsha Vardhana Empereur et Poète*, p. 4.

⁴ Watters, *O.C.*, II, p. 343.

which were unfit to give as alms. Every year he assembled the Śramaṇas from all countries and on the third and seventh days he bestowed on them in charity the four kinds of alms (*viz.*, food, drink, medicine, clothing).¹

If it be true that in 644 A.D.² or thereabouts Harśa held the last quinquennial assembly,³ and that Harśa was a devout Buddhist, then the first quinquennial assembly must have been held in about 619 A.D. A monarch of the type of Harśa would not have undertaken a great campaign when he had assumed, if not the red robes, as he had promised the sage of the Vindhya, at least the duties of a devout Buddhist. It cannot be believed that Harśa was engaged in a campaign of any magnitude after the year 620 A.D. when he seems to have set himself the task of spreading the influence of Buddhism over the land. But an exception need be mentioned here. Even after holding one of his great Buddhist meetings, the exigencies of the State did not prevent Harśa from sending out an expedition against Ganjam.⁴ The conquest of this province was the last acquisition of Harśa. But for this exception, the reign of Harśa seems not to have been marked with warfare ; and if the evidence of Huiien Tsiang can be relied upon, the quinquennial assemblies were held since the year 619 A.D. Over and above the dramatic incidents which took place about this time during the sad sojourn of Harśa in the forests of the Vindhya, and which profoundly influenced his mind, we must go to the contemporary history of the western Chalukya king to find out why Harśa gave up all ideas of a world conquest, and why he never thought of sending any contingent to the south. It will be seen that the evidence gathered from the inscriptions of Pulakeśi II and of his successors corroborates the testimony of the Chinese pilgrim.

Huiien Tsiang himself says that Harśa never succeeded in subduing Pulakeśi. "The great king Śilāditya at this time

¹ Beal, *O.C.*, I, p. 214.

³ *Ind. Ant.*, XIII, p. 232.

² Beal, *Life, O.C.*, p. 83.

⁴ *Priyadarśika*, Introd., p. xxxiii.

was invading east and west, and countries far and near were giving allegiance to him but Mohalacha (Maharashtra under Pulakeśi) refused to become subject to him.”¹ Moreover, we have inscriptions of Pulakeśi himself, of his successors, and even of kings of another dynasty, the Raṣtrakūṭas,—all of which speak of the memorable defeat of Harśa at the hands of Pulakeśi. The failure of Harśa to subdue Maharashtra, therefore, might be taken to be an undisputed fact.

I shall first take the famous inscription of Pulakeśi which has been till now considered by many to be the earliest reference to his victory over Harśa. This is the well-known Aihole inscription dated A.D. 634—635.

It runs thus—

“Envious because his troops of mighty elephants were slain in war, Harsha—whose lotuses, which were his feet, were covered with the rays of the jewels of the chiefs that were nourished by his immeasurable power—was caused by him to have his joy melted away by fear.”²

Dr. Jouveau-Dubreuil, however, says that there is no reference to Harśa at all in this Aihole inscription. “It is noteworthy,” says the Doctor, “that the Aihole inscription which bears the date 634 A.D., makes no mention of king Harshavardhana. The documents posterior to it mention the victory gained by Pulakeśin over Harsha. It is probable that it was about the year 634 A.D. that Harsha vanquished Dhruvasena II, king of Valabhi; Harsha wished to extend his conquests much more, but was stopped by Pulakeśin. This event probably took place about 637 or 638 A.D.”³ This opinion, I believe, cannot be justified. But I shall proceed to cite more evidence in the inscriptions of Pulakeśi, of his successors, and of kings who belonged to an altogether new royal family. I shall first deal with the inscriptions of the immediate successors of Pulakeśi II.

¹ Watters : *O.C.*, II, p. 239.

² *Ind. Ant.*, VIII, p. 244 ; *Ep. Ind.*, VI, p. 10.

³ Dr. Jouveau-Dubreuil : *Ancient History of the Dekhan*, p. 113 ; *Ind. Hist.*, Q., II, p. 384.

An undated grant of Nāgavardhana, also called Tribhuvanāśraya, the son of Jayasimhavarma, also called Dharāśraya, who was one of the younger brothers of Pulakeśin, says —“..was Sri Pulakeśi Vallabha..... who possessed a second name (which however is *omitted*) which he had acquired by defeating the glorious Sri Harsha, the supreme lord of the northern region.”¹ In a grant of Ādityavarma, son of Pulakeśin II, we read—“Satyāśraya (Pulakeśin II) who was decorated with the title of ‘Supreme Lord’ which he acquired by defeating Sri Harshavardhana, the warlike lord of all the regions of the north.”² A grant of Vikramāditya VI, dated A.D. 675, runs thus—“The dear son of Maharaja and Parameśvara, Satyāśraya, the favourite of fortune and of the earth, who acquired the second name of Parameśvara or Supreme Lord by defeating Harshavardhana, the warlike lord of all the regions of the north.”³ This is repeated in the grant of 680—681 of the same monarch,⁴ and again in the grants of 689—690 of the same Vikramāditya.⁵ A grant by Vinayāditya says—“His (*i.e.*, Kirtivarma’s) son was Satyāśraya—the favourite of the world, the great king, the supreme king, the supreme lord,—who acquired the second name of “Supreme Lord” by defeating Sri Harshavardhana, the warlike lord of all the regions of the north.”⁶ An inscription dated 694 A.D. says—“His son, who by defeating Harsha, the lord of all the north, gained another name of Parameśvara, was Satyāśraya Sri Prithivi-vallabha Mahārāja Parameśvara.”⁷ In 757 A.D. again we have the following—“His (*i.e.*, Kirtivarma’s) son, who by defeating Harshavardhana, the warlike lord of all the north, acquired the title of Parameśvara, was Satyāśraya Sri Prithivi-vallabha Mahārāja Parameśvara, etc.”⁸ Even so late as the twelfth century the memory of the crushing defeat suffered by Harśa was carefully preserved, as can be made

¹ *Ind. Ant.*, IX, p. 123.

² *Ind. Ant.*, XI, p. 68.

³ *J. Bom. B.R.A.S.*, XV, p. 226.

⁴ *J. Bom. B.R.A.S.*, XI, pp. 228, 230.

⁵ *J. Bom. B.R.A.S.*, XI, p. 232.

⁶ *Ind. Ant.*, VI, p. 87.

⁷ *Ep. Carn.*, XI, Dg. 66, p. 42.

⁸ *Ep. Carn.*, X, Hl. 63, p. 15.

out from the following inscription dated A.D. 1123—
 “Satyāśraya on his becoming a young man,—for who of the Chalukyas would deviate from the path of righteousness?—to him who conquered the regions, subdued the great king Harsha, gave more than a hundredfold of their desires, etc.”¹

But what is more interesting is that this defeat should have had almost an international significance. When the Raṣtrakutas measured swords with the western Chalukyas, in connection with the supremacy of the Karnataka, they recorded their victories in as eloquent a manner as any other royal family did in South Indian history. An inscription of the Raṣtrakuta king (dated Śaka 690) named Dantidurga, son of Indra Raya II, says that that monarch “forcibly with a few soldiers conquered the endless forces of Karnataka, which were invincible to others, and which were skilled in effecting defeats on the lord of Kanchi, the king of Kerala, the Chola, the Pandya, Sri Harsha and Vajrata, etc.”² From the above epigraphs we may conclude the following:—

(a) that Harṣa was always called Sri Harṣavardhana in the southern inscriptions, and never Silāditya;

(b) that he did indeed suffer a great defeat at the hands of Pulakeśi II;

(c) that the memory of this defeat was not only handed down in western Chalukyan tradition but was also transmitted to non-western Chalukyan tradition as well; and

(d) that the victory secured for the great western Chalukya king, Pulakeśi, the title of “Paramēśvara”—a title by which Pulakeśi was known in the history of the South.

The question now is—when was this title of “Paramēśvara”, which Pulakeśi is said to have acquired as a mark of his triumph over Harṣa, appended to his name for the first time? It has been taken for granted by most of the scholars that the Aihole inscription dated 634—635 A.D. is the earliest record of the victory of Pulakeśi. But as Dr. Fleet has already pointed out, this was not the earliest

¹ *Ep. Carn.*, XI, Dg. 1, p. 21.

² *Ep. Ind.*, XIII, p. 281.

mention of Harśa's defeat at the hands of Pulakeśi. There is a grant of Pulakeśi himself dated Śaka 535 which speaks of his victory over a hostile king (or over hostile kings) who applied himself (or who applied themselves) to a contest of a hundred battles. It is the Haidarabad grant which runs thus—

“The favourite of the world, the great king Satyāśraya—who is the abode of the power of statesmanship and humility and other good qualities, and who has acquired the second name of ‘Supreme Lord’ (Parameshvara) by victory over hostile kings (or over a hostile king), who applied themselves (or himself) to a contest of a hundred battles—issues this command to all the people, etc.”¹

Two objections might be brought against this Haidarabad grant—first, whether the clause “of a hostile king” admits of a double meaning; second, why the name of Harśa which appears so clearly in the Aihole inscription—although, as we have seen Dr. Dubreuil has denied its existence in the inscription—is not to be seen in the Haidarabad grant. If the defeat which Pulakeśi inflicted on Harśa was so memorable as to have received recognition even at the hands of the Raśtrakūṭas, and if indeed all the records of Pulakeśi himself and of his successors make us believe it was so, and if this Haidarabad grant is the earliest record which mentions this defeat, then the name of the king who was beaten, and whose discomfiture made the name of Pulakeśi renowned, would certainly have been given in the grant. Its absence is a proof that this Haidarabad grant does not speak of the defeat of Harśa, and this record is not the earliest record of the victory of Pulakeśi.

To reject these two objections we have to examine the clause itself and then the course of conquests of Pulakeśi as given in the Aihole inscription. That the clause “by victory over hostile kings (or over a hostile king) who applied themselves (or himself) to a contest of a hundred battles”, admits of some ambiguity is evident on an examination of the same in the original, which runs thus—

¹ *Ind. Ant.*, VI, p. 74; also *Fleet, Dy. Kan. Dist.* (2nd Ed.).

“ श्रीसत्याश्रयपृथ्वीवल्लभमहाराजः समरशतसंघट्टसंस्तकपरवृत्ति-
पराजयोपलब्धपरमेश्वरापरनामधेयः ”¹

Dr. Fleet himself admits that the Haidarabad grant says that he (Pulakeśi) acquired “ by defeating hostile kings who had applied themselves (or a hostile king who had applied himself) to a hundred battles ” and that subsequent records state more specifically that “ he acquired it (the title of Parameshvara) by defeating the glorious Harshavardhana, the warlike lord of all the regions of the north. ”²

There was no other monarch in North India in the early years of Pulakeśi's reign to whom this title could be more fittingly applied than Harśa. He was, as we have already seen, while only in his teens, sent along with his brother Rajyavardhana, against the Hunas in the north. Immediately after his return from the north, he vowed to take revenge against the Gowda king. It was Harśa who, as we have seen, brought the five Indies under his sway. Even on the eve of his career he showed his great ability as a commander by his subjugation of Ganjam. It is evident, therefore, that the reference in the Haidarabad grant could be only to Harśavardhana, who was, indeed, a king who applied himself to the contest of a hundred battles. The omission of the name of Harśa was perhaps intentionally done in order to enhance the glory of Pulakeśi by his victory over a king whose name was too well known in the whole of the continent. If so, it has to be remembered that as the originator of an era, as a great soldier, as one of the greatest patrons of Buddhism and as a remarkable royal dramatist, in all likelihood, Harśa must have been very well known all over the Indian world.

That this reference is the earliest reference in Pulakeśi's own inscriptions can be made out also by an examination of the Aihole inscription. The cause of conquests as given in that famous epigraph, I am afraid, is not in any geographical, and is certainly not in any chronological, order. Before

¹ *Ind. Ant.*, VI, O.C., p. 73.

² Fleet, *Dy. Kan. Dist.* (2nd Ed.), p. 351, note (4).

I examine the Aihole inscription itself, I shall cite the opinions of Dr. Bhandarkar and Dr. Fleet who were the earliest to write about it. Dr. Bhandarkar says the following:—

“The date of the inscription (Aihole inscription) from which the greater portion of this narrative is taken is 556 Śaka, corresponding to A.D. 634, so that Pulakeśi's career of conquest had closed before A.D. 634.”¹ Writes Dr. Fleet—“Such is the account given in the Aihole inscription of A.D. 634—635. It may doubtless be accepted in its general outlines. That all the earlier events recorded in it took place before August A.D. 612 is established by the Haidarabad grant, which shows that Pulakeśin II was then in possession of Badami, and though it does not mention Harshavardhana by name, implies by the title which was acquired by the victory over him that that victory had then already been achieved; and they are probably to be placed in A.D. 608—609.”²

That we are to agree with Dr. Fleet and Dr. Bhandarkar can be made out by an examination of the Aihole inscription itself. To begin with, this epigraph had no royal sanction behind. It is an eulogy “by certain Ravikirti, who during the reign of the Chalukya Polekeśi Satyāśraya (*i.e.*, the western Chalukya Pulakeśi II) whom he describes as his patron, founded the temple of the Jaina prophet Jinendra, on which the inscription is engraved, and who uses the occasion to furnish an eulogistic account (*praśasti*) of the history of the Chalukya family, and especially of the exploits of Pulikeśin II.”³ In its mode of beginning, ending, and in its accuracy as regards chronology and geography, this inscription is not like the one which might have been ordered to be engraved by Pulakeśin II himself. This inscription begins with an invocation to Jinendra—“Victorious is the holy Jinendra etc.”⁴ and ends

¹ Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar, *The Early History of the Deccan*, p. 39.

² Fleet, *O.C.* p. 351.

³ Kielhorn, *Ep. Ind.*, VI, p. 2.

⁴ *Ep. Ind.*, VI, p. 7.

with a praise of the Jaina mansion, "caused to be built by the wise Ravikirti, who has obtained the highest favour of Satyāśraya whose rule is burdened by the three oceans. Of this eulogy and of this dwelling of the Jina in the three worlds, the wise Ravikirti himself is the author, and also the founder. May that Ravikirti be victorious etc., etc., who by his poetic skill has attained to the fame of Kalidasa and and of Bharavi."¹ The western Chalukya grants begin and end in another manner. Either they speak of the greatness of the monarchs, as is revealed in the beginning of the Haidarabad grant of Pulakeśi—"Hail! The grandeur of the great king Satyāśraya Sri Polikeśivallabha whose body by ablutions performed after celebrating horse sacrifices, and who adorned the family of the glorious Chalukyas who are etc., etc., and who have had all kings made subject to them by the mere sight of the sign of the Boar which they had acquired through the favour of the holy Narayana, etc.",² or they commence with the usual verse in praise of God Viśnu in the form of the Boar, and end with the customary address to future kings, about continuing the grant, followed by two of the usual benedictive and imprecative verses, and the name of the engraver."³

The point to be noted is that the Aihole inscription being an epigraph written by a poet, could not have the accuracy of an inscription ordered to be engraved under the royal seal. We see, moreover, the inaccuracy of the geographical and chronological parts of the inscription. The course of Pulakeśi's conquests as given in the Aihole inscription next deserves to be studied. The first enemies whom Pulakeśi encountered were Appāyika and Govinda, north of the River Bhīmarathi (verse 17). From there Pulakeśi came southwards to Vanavasi which he besieged. This city was on the Varadā (verse 18). Then he came to the extreme south on the west coast—to the territory of the Alupas, *viz.*,

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

² *Ind. Ant.*, VI, p. 74.

³ *J. Bom. B.R.A.S.*, XVI, pp. 278-79.

Āḷvakhēda Six Thousand—which was partly on the Western Ghauts and partly in Tuluva. He brought under his influence the Gangas and the Alupas. Then he turned northwards again and destroyed a maritime city called Puri (verse 21). From here Pulakeśi is represented as having gone directly to the land of the Latas, the Malavas and Gurjaras, who became his allies (verse 22). Then is introduced the defeat of Harśa. The order of events here set forth is unintelligible. We are to assume that Pulakeśi was firmly established at Badami when he issued his Haidarabad grant. This Badami is near the Malaprabha river, a branch of the Kriśna, in the Kaladgi District, now called the Bijapur District in the province of Bombay. It is taken for granted that Pulakeśi started from his capital Badami. In that case, according to the Aihole inscription, he went almost in a westerly direction, for the territory of the two persons Appāyika and Govinda, whom he encountered at the beginning of his campaign, was near the River Bhīmarathi. This is the name given to the River Bhīma which joins the Kriśna. Then he suddenly turns in a south-westerly direction to the river Varadā and onwards to the Āḷvakhēda, returning again to the north to subjugate Puri, the maritime stronghold of an unidentified enemy. All this is untenable if we once realize that by Śaka 535, Pulakeśin was already firmly established at Badami. “The rājyābhiśeka” or coronation of Pulakeśin II took place on some date, still remaining to be exactly determined, from Bhadrapada Sukla 1 of Śaka Samvat 532 current, falling in 609 up to the Purnimanta Bhadrapada Krishna 15, the new moon day of S. S. 533 current, falling in A.D. 610; and it may probably be safely placed somewhere in the latter part of A.D. 609.”¹ If Pulakeśi was indeed crowned king in A.D. 609 or thereabouts, it is evident that all the surrounding country was completely within his sway by the time he was crowned. And any wandering of his from the capital westwards, and thence southwards, turning afterwards

¹ Fleet, *O.C.*, p. 351.

to the north, within his own dominions, would look highly preposterous. If we say that Pulakeśi was consolidating his territories, it would be going against the tenor of the Haidarabad grant which says that that grant was issued in the third year of his coronation, and that it was a command to all the people. Further, in the Haidarabad grant it is clearly stated that Pulakeśi defeated a great king. But this defeat is not at all mentioned in the Aihole inscription. If the Haidarabad grant is to be accepted—and there is no reason to doubt its identity—Pulakeśi began his wars from the third year of his reign, *i.e.*, A.D. 612. The Aihole inscription is dated A.D. 634 and if we are to believe that the events narrated in it are in any geographical and chronological order, we are to assume that Pulakeśi went on fighting from 612 A.D. till 634 A.D. This assumption would fit in neither with his position as Parameśvara nor with status of these little kingdoms which, it is hard to believe, required such a long time to be subjugated : Therefore we conclude that—

(a) the Aihole inscription of 634 A.D. is not the earliest record of Pulakeśi's victories and especially of his victory over Harśa ;

(b) that the geographical and chronological order of conquests as given in it cannot be relied upon ; and

(c) that it is more or less a general resumé of the conquests of Pulakeśi written by his court poet.

Having failed to secure any clue as regards the date of the great victory which Pulakeśi won over Harśa from the Aihole inscription, we fall back upon the evidence as given in the Haidarabad grant dated Śaka 535 (612 A.D.). The evidence of this epigraph is in perfect harmony with the testimony of Huien Tsiang. The Haidarabad grant is a proof of what the Chinese pilgrim has told us of the ambitious activities of Harśavardhana. As has been already pointed out, Huien Tsiang represents Harśa as fighting with his enemies during the first six years of his reign. Now, if we agree with Dr. Fleet in placing the date of accession of Harśa in 606 A.D. Harśa went on fighting, according to Huien Tsiang, till 612

A.D.¹ and in 612 A.D. Harśa met his greatest enemy. For in that year, as we have seen, Pulakeśi beat a king who had applied himself to the contest of a hundred battles—a king who could be no other than the monarch who had just finished conquering the Five Indies, and was almost planning a Dig-Vijaya, when he met with a crushing defeat. 612 A.D., therefore, is the date when Pulakeśi defeated Harśa. It is based on the Haidarabad grant of Pulakeśi and it marks exactly six years of warfare which, according to Huien Tsiang, Harśa undertook after his coronation. It was just the year when Harśa, failed in his attempts at a world conquest, laid down his arms, wise as he was, and guided by the deep influence of Buddhism, as well as by the affectionate counsel of his sister, Rajyaśri, remained contented with the conquest of the Five Indies, and inaugurated a long reign of peace and prosperity. This explains to us why he held so many quinquennial assemblies of learned Buddhists in the course of thirty years of his reign; and why he never thought of conquering the south of India which was almost completely within the influence of his great western Chalukya adversary, Pulakeśin II.



¹ Fleet, *Corpus Indicarum*, Vol. III (*Int. of the Guptas*), 178 (n), p. 316.



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